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ER-2-9541

29 May 1952

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Director of Central Intelligence

FROM : Deputy Director (Plans)

SUBJECT : Certain Matters for Consideration of the PSB  
Concerning the Berlin Situation

1. With reference to our discussion this morning and pursuant to your request, I am submitting to you herewith (with copies available for distribution by you to Messrs. Foster and Bruce) a brief list of items which I consider to be worthy of attention as a matter of priority. I understand from what you have said that a special committee or panel, consisting of senior representatives of the Departments of State and Defense, is being designated to concern itself with the Berlin situation, but it has also occurred to me that the PSB has an important role to play. It is the view of Mr. Dulles, which I share, that the Berlin situation is one of those major current matters with which the PSB should concern itself for the purpose of stimulating action on the part of the operating departments and agencies.

2. Upon the assumption that Soviet authorities and their East German stooges will apply increasingly stringent measures for the purpose of isolating Berlin and the Eastern Zone of Germany from the West, and that as these measures are applied the difficulties of our position in Berlin will mount -- the old question of counter measures will surely come up again. On two previous occasions with which I am familiar, there has been a sudden spasm of concern and frantic energy within the Government in an attempt to draw up and consider a list of possible retaliatory measures susceptible of application on a world-wide basis. Ad hoc committees have been hurriedly set up, and the possible effectiveness and feasibility of the proposals which they have cooked up on an almost overnight basis have been prejudiced by inadequacy of study and examination. It is my proposal, therefore, that an appropriate group take up this matter now while there is still some time for a reasonably orderly canvassing of the possibilities of action and review of the feasibility and desirability of each. The departments and agencies primarily interested should be called upon to contribute their suggestions and recommendations, and I am sure that within a matter of two days this Agency could make a list of helpful suggestions. In the ordinary course of our work, we have been building up a stockpile of ideas and proposals which would lend themselves to covert and semi-covert action.

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3. One very important point to be considered is whether there should be any statement or declaration of our intention to apply retaliatory measures -- with a view to the possibility of discouraging or reducing actions on the part of the Soviets and the East Germans; or whether we, the British, and the French should simply begin quietly the putting into effect of a series of measures which would be painful to the other side. The Russians operate this way themselves and would certainly be quick to get the point, and this latter course has the additional advantage of not proclaiming big things which we may not be able to do or placing ourselves in the position of being charged with giving ultimata.

4. There are two related matters of a primarily propaganda and psychological warfare nature, viz.:

a. The question whether this Government (and also the British, French, and West Germans) should officially declare or pronounce that the Russians and the East Germans are "blockading" Berlin. The Russians do not like the word, blockade, at all and it is very embarrassing to them, but the question is whether it is wise for this label to be nailed on their actions by official statements. It has already begun to come up in the press and in many other unofficial ways, and is sure to become current in usage irrespective of whether official pronouncements are made or not.

b. The question whether we and our friends and associates should launch an all-out propaganda drive to establish the fact that it is the Russians and the East Germans who are responsible by their overt and tangible actions for the dividing of Germany. I would strongly recommend this course of action and feel that we are already late in starting it. The Russians have gained already the initiative in the effort to place the blame on us, and their propaganda machine is running at full blast down this road. We have much better ammunition but we are firing it only fitfully. All of our outlets as well as those of the British, French, and West Germans should be hammering away at the Soviet and Communist actions, which are so clear and so understandable, even to the least politically-minded person. The cutting of telephone communications, the digging of trenches, and the creation of a three-mile "no man's land" along the zonal boundary; the orders of expulsion of West Germans from the Eastern Zone, etc., etc., are actions which do not even need to be dramatized to be understood.

cc: Mr. Foster  
cc: Mr. Bruce

FRANK G. WISNER

TRANSMITTAL			LIP		
			29 May		
			(Date)		
TO: Executive Registry					
BUILDING			ROOM NO.		
REMARKS:					
<p>1) This is the Director's courtesy copy. Mr. Wiener handed the original to the General this morning.</p> <p>2) Mr. Becker has borrowed your ER copy; will return.</p>					
FROM: O/PD/P					
BUILDING		ROOM NO.		EXTENSION	
FORM NO. 36-8					
SEP 1946 16-65208-1 GPO					